

**EXETER-WEST GREENWICH    October 25, 2011**

**REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT**

## **MINUTES**

**The Exeter-West Greenwich Regional School District School Committee held a meeting on this date at 6:00 p.m. in the Jr. – Sr. High School Library. Members present were Gregory Coutcher, Chairman; Teri Maia-Cicero, Vice-Chairwoman; Valerie Zuercher, Clerk; Mark Rafanelli, Theresa Donovan, Paul McFadden and Claudine Pande. Others present: Superintendent Thomas J. Geismar, Director of Administration Robert V. Ross**

**ORDER – Chair Coutcher called the meeting to order at 6:00p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.**

**Open Forum – No one spoke**

**RECOGNITIONS/ACHIEVEMENTS – United Health Care Student Video Competition Winners – Postponed as student recipient informed the superintendent they would not be available to attend this evening.**

**PRESENTATION – Sr. Project Update – Superintendent Geismar introduced Senior Project Coordinator Robert Quindazzi. Mr. Quindazzi gave an overall review of the senior project and then spoke specifically on a few key topics. Specific points included that 100%**

of the senior class has submitted their letter of intent for their projects. Further, he discussed research paper element of senior project, including the very popular elective Research Paper class that is being offered to seniors in order to better prepare them for the writing of this document. He assured the committee those students who are not taking the research paper elective are being monitored to make sure they are staying on task with the project.

Vice Chairperson Cicero noted that as a parent of a former senior high student the direction and communication was often inconsistent which lead to student and parent stress. She noted that with her current senior high student there is marked improvement in the consistency of communication to the students and parents when compared to two years ago and is feeling no stress about senior project this year. The superintendent noted Mr. Quindazzi has been instrumental in improving communication to students and parents.

Quindazzi continued with a discussion on benchmark requirements that students must perform during the 9-12 school years. A review of benchmarks completion is being performed with a focus on why benchmark artifacts might not be confirmed as submitted.

Member Rafanelli inquired if the senior advisory classes are being used to reach students about the senior project process. Quindazzi responded that this is an ongoing effort.

Clerk Zuercher asked if student benchmarks are missing what can be done. She suggested that the benchmarks should be stored in the

**new SIS Aspen.**

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**Superintendent Geismar stated that the benchmarks would be stored in Aspen going forward as presently the Aspen resources are tapped out.**

**Member Donovan voiced her pleasure at the development and content of the senior project website noting it is fabulous. She then inquired if the senior seminar will be running, and if so, how students will enroll or elect not to enroll. Member Cicero noted that senior seminar has been replace with the research paper elective. Quindazzi informed that as an elective, students can opt into the class if they feel they need that elective. However, as with any course the students can also drop the class if they determine the class is not what they need. Superintendent Geismar stated that the research paper elective has been well received by students.**

**Mr. Quindazzi then went on to discuss how the students have been receiving a consistent message from their teachers regarding compliance with the senior project procedures, as well as the possible consequences for failure to comply. Audience member, senior high principal Mr. Butler spoke effusively about the improved communications to students and parents. He noted he would put in**

**ramp-up programs and job coaches if necessary to ensure student success.**

**The discussion returned to benchmarks, with Quindazzi informing the committee that of all the benchmarks that need to be documented about 770 of them are missing. He reiterated that the reasons for the missing docs are being investigated, but as you deal with students and teachers to resolve the missing docs, the endeavor can be challenging.**

**Clerk Zuercher reiterated the benchmarks need to be computerized. Quindazzi noted that several years ago, there was an investment in scanners to assist in electronically capturing the artifacts but that was met with limited success.**

**Member Rafanelli inquired if the senior project steering committee is still meeting. Mr. Butler responded that the committee is intact; however, as the senior project is running much smoother no meetings have been needed, as concerns for discussion have not surfaced.**

**The committee thanked Mr. Quindazzi for his work/**

**ROUTINE ITEMS – CONSENT AGENDA- Superintendent Geismar gave an overview of the Consent Agenda.**

**Clerk Zuercher made a motion to accept the consent agenda.**

**Member Rafanelli seconded the motion. Voted 7:0 in favor**

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**The following items were approved:**

**A. Approval of Minutes - Regular Minutes of October 11, 2011;  
Executive Session Minutes of October 11, 2011**

**B. Personnel Items**

**1. Appointments**

**2. Leaves of Absence**

**3. Resignations – (As Recommended by the Superintendent, with  
Regret)**

**a. Letter of Resignation from Josh Procaccianti from his position  
as Sr. high Assistant Wrestling Coach effective October 11,  
2011**

**4. Grievances**

**5. Non-Renewals**

**6. Recalls**

**7. Sabbaticals**

**C. Bills – In the amount of \$376,846.14**

**D. Home School Approval**

**Six (6) Students**

**End Consent Agenda**

**Correspondence – (1) Smithfield Public Schools School Committee Resolution (Pension Reform) Passed October 17, 2011**

**NEW BUSINESS – School Lunch – Point of Sales (POS) System, Size of Milk Cartons – Mr. Ross spoke about the Point of Sale system currently in place at each school. This was followed by the confirmation that the milk cartons are 8 ounces. Member McFadden inquired what the cost of the milk is and Ross responded the milks are included in a full meal but that they can be purchased a-la-carte for \$.50. Clerk Zuercher inquired about what happens if a student has no funds or comes up short. Mr. Ross stated they are offered a lunch with the promise to pay. Clerk Zuercher wants to make sure no students are turned away, and suggested that a communication should go out to parents informing them what happens when a student does not have funds for lunch. Member Pande agreed that a communiqué should be issued.**

**School Committee Resolution – Pension Reform – Superintendent Geismar discussed the pension reform resolution document stating that many school committees have signed on to such a document as a means to convey concerns about the impact to education should the pension reform under consideration go forward.**

**MOTION: To authorize school committee chair to sign and approve the pension reform resolution. McFadden: Pande.**

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**Discussion was introduced by Member Donovan regarding the wording of the document. Her concern is that the document is awkwardly worded in that the first section references state employees and teachers, then the rest of the document repeatedly references state and municipal employees only, while omitting teachers. She voiced that she could not support the resolution as currently worded.**

**Chairman Coutcher moved the motion 6:1, with Donovan voicing a nay vote.**

**Approve Cafeteria Equipment Bid Recommendation – Mr. Ross presented the cafeteria bid. Members asked about the timeline for the work to be performed and Mr. Ross informed them the work will be performed during winter break of December 26-29, 2011 and should be a 2 or 3-day project.**

**MOTION: To approve the award of the Cafeteria Equipment Replacement and Repairs to TriMark United East in the amount of \$27,189.31. McFadden:Zuercher 7:0.**

## **UNFINISHED BUSINESS – Approve 2012 – 2013 Budget Development Timeline –**

**Superintendent Geismar presented the budget timeline bringing top the committee's attention that as presented the submittal for amendments to the budget occur prior to the school committee approving the budget. A discussion was held that the Superintendent should reach out to legal counsel to determine how to extend the timeline for amendment submittals.**

**Approve Revised 2012 School Committee Meeting Dates – Superintendent Geismar presented the proposed change for the January school committee meetings.**

**Motion: To approve changing the first school committee meeting to January 3, 2012. Donovan : Zuercher, 7:0.**

**Capital Project Update – No new news**

**Reports/Comments – None**

**Important Dates and Meetings – Wednesday, October 26,  
2011-Building Committee Meeting; Wednesday, November 2,  
2011-Building Committee Meeting; Tuesday, November 8,  
2011-School Committee Meeting; Wednesday, November 9,  
2011-Building Committee Meeting; Wednesday, November 16,  
2011-Building Committee Meeting; Tuesday, November 22,  
2011-School Committee Meeting; Wednesday, November 23,**



**2011-Building Committee Meeting; Wednesday, November 30,  
2011-Building Committee Meeting**

**EXECUTIVE SESSION – RIGL 42-46-4 and RIGL 42-46-5 – Vice Chair  
Cicero moved to go into Executive Session at 7:45 p.m. in accordance  
with 42-46-5 (2) – CBA – (C94/Teachers' Association) – Negotiation  
Discussion and/or Pending Litigation and**

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**42-46-5 (a)(4) – Discussion of Investigative Proceedings Regarding  
Allegations of Employee Misconduct; seconded by Member Rafanelli;  
and voted as follows:**

**Gregory Coutcher Yes**

**Teri Cicero Yes**

**Valerie Zuercher Yes**

**Mark Rafanelli Yes**

**Theresa Donovan Yes**

**Paul McFadden Yes**

**Claudine Pande Yes**

**Meeting recessed to Executive Session at 6:50 p.m.**

**Clerk Zuercher moved to reconvene to Open Session. Member**

**Rafanelli seconded the motion. Voted \_7:0 in favor.**

**Meeting reconvened to Open Session at 7:45 p.m.**

**There were no votes taken during Executive Session.**

**Adjournment – Vice Chair Cicero moved to adjourn; Member Donovan seconded the motion; and voted 7:0 in favor. Meeting adjourned at 7:45 p.m.**

**ROBERT V. ROSS**

**DIRECTOR OF ADMINISTRATION**